

# King County Councilmember **Bob Ferguson**

**Creating a budget for our community**



**District 2**

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**King County**

Dear Neighbor:

This newsletter provides an overview of the recently completed 2005 King County budget, highlighting projects funded in your neighborhoods and issues important to you. Spending your hard-earned tax dollars wisely is the most important part of my job. Fiscal responsibility is something I take seriously.

The County's general fund faced a \$20 million shortfall in 2005. To place this in perspective, the County has cut nearly \$100 million in the past few years, making the 2005 cuts seem relatively modest in comparison. With less cuts to make, more vital programs will continue to be funded.

My budget priorities were ensuring adequate funding for transportation, the environment, human services, and District 2 organizations and projects. I appreciate those of you who participated in the budget process with emails, phone calls, or attending public budget hearings. Your input helped me better represent you.

I am committed to being your most accessible elected official. Please contact my office if you have any questions about the budget or other issues of interest to you.

Sincerely,

Bob Ferguson

# 2005 KING COUNTY BUDGET

Over 80 percent of the \$3.4 billion County budget is dedicated to specific programs such as Solid Waste, Metro Transit, Wastewater, and Emergency Medical Services.

## THE GENERAL FUND

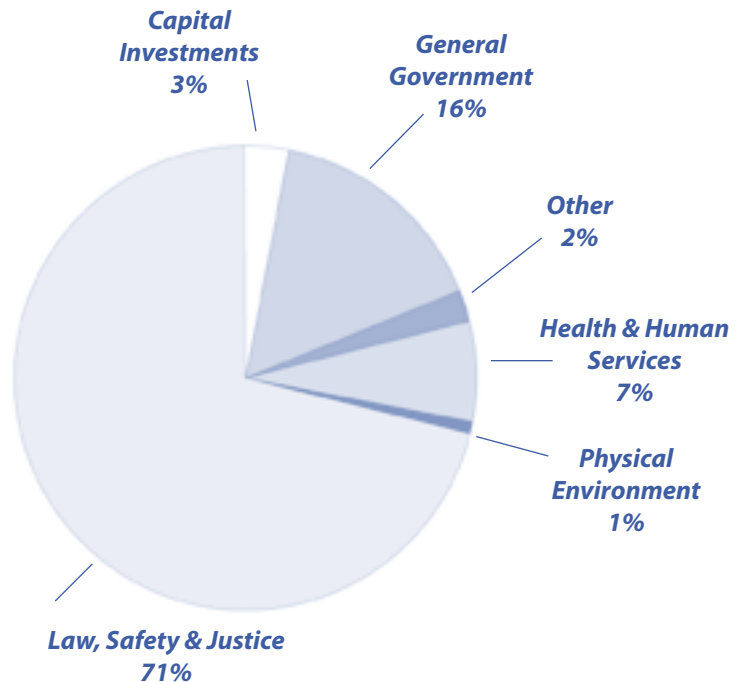
The remaining 16 percent of the County's budget makes up the \$539 million General Fund, which finances County services that by necessity must be largely supported by general tax revenues.

Over 70 percent of the General Fund is devoted to Law, Safety & Justice Services:

- Operation of Jails – \$118 million
- Sheriff's Office – \$111 million
- Judicial Services (Superior Court, District Court, Prosecuting Attorney, Public Defense) – \$153 million

The rest of the General Fund is directed toward health and human service programs, elections, parks, and the operation of County government.

## 2005 King County General Fund \$539 million



## WHERE YOUR TAX DOLLAR GOES

King County receives an average of 15 cents, or about 1/6th of your property tax dollar, to provide regional services.

Your property tax check is paid to "King County" because property tax collection is a duty of the County treasury. However, King County only keeps 15 percent of your tax dollars. The County treasury disburses the remainder of your property taxes to schools and local governments, including cities and other taxing districts.

### Your property tax dollar pays for:

#### Schools – 53 cents

Local school levies and state school fund



#### Local Services – 30 cents

City and local services, including unincorporated roads, libraries, parks, fire and hospital districts



#### King County – 15 cents

King County General Fund and other regional services



#### Port – 2 cents

Port of Seattle



## HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

My priority for the 2005 budget was ensuring no further cuts to health & human services funding. Fortunately, the Council sustained the current level of health & human services funding at nearly \$450 million, ensuring that more citizens will have assistance to achieve a high quality of life. In addition, a comprehensive review of our Public Health system will be funded for 2005, to increase efficiency and effectiveness while reducing costs.

## TRANSPORTATION

As our roads and bridges become increasingly clogged, we need to keep alternative transportation options safe and affordable in addition to finding new ways to get people out of their cars. I am committed to keeping bus fares affordable, our Park & Rides well-lit and safe, and studying the potential for waterborne transit on Lake Union.

### Metro Bus Fares

The Council rejected a proposed bus fare increase of 25 cents per ride. I was particularly concerned that this fare increase would adversely impact the disabled, seniors, and students.

### Park & Ride Security

A new \$2.3 million project is approved to address security concerns by improving lighting at all County park & ride lots, including the Green Lake and Northgate locations. As a daily Metro bus commuter, I look forward to seeing these improvements.

### Water Taxi

A study of waterborne transit is approved in the 2005 budget to analyze the potential for a water taxi on Lake Union and Lake Washington with the results expected in June 2005. A water taxi on Lake Union could serve the University District, Wallingford, and Fremont, connecting these neighborhoods to South Lake Union.



*Bob takes a test run on the water taxi with Andy Bennett, District 2 Representative to King County Transit Advisory Committee.*

## ENVIRONMENT

I am proud to pass a budget that supports the environment, putting new funds towards Thornton Creek, youth environmental volunteer programs, and our regional trail system benefiting the Burke Gilman Trail.

### Thornton Creek Open Space Acquisition

\$200,000 is approved to acquire open space along Thornton Creek through Conservation Futures, a voter-approved levy fund dedicated to open space preservation. I support this project, which will benefit salmon, wildlife, and avian species and allow for habitat restoration and environmental education.

### EarthCorps

\$300,000 is secured for EarthCorps, a youth service program dedicated to environmental restoration. My staff and I volunteered with EarthCorps at Licton Springs Park, pulling non-native weeds to help restore the natural vegetation. I am pleased to support this organization committed to youth and the environment.

### Regional Trail Acquisition

Like many of you, I am a frequent user of King County's wonderful regional trail system. I supported \$1.5 million for acquisitions and development of the County's regional trail system, including \$1.2 million to begin design work on the redevelopment of the Burke Gilman Trail in Lake Forest Park.



**Bob Ferguson**

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*Bob and Earthcorps volunteers help restore Licton Springs Park.*

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**DISTRICT 2 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS**

I worked hard to support local non-profit and human service organizations in District 2. My staff and I volunteered at several of these organizations and discovered the positive impact they have on our community. These programs benefit seniors, vulnerable children, and the working poor.

**Wallingford Community Senior Center**  
\$25,000 is secured for the Outreach Assistance & Support to Independent Seniors program at the Wallingford Community Senior Center. This will allow the center to secure a private space where they can provide health screenings and counseling to seniors living independently.

**Ryther Child Center**  
\$25,000 is secured for the Sexually Aggressive Youth Therapists program at Ryther Child Center in the Lake City neighborhood. This program provides residential treatment for children, ages 6-12, who have suffered from long-term physical and sexual abuse resulting in significant sexual behavior problems.

**North Helpline**  
I successfully doubled the budget available from \$10,000 to \$20,000 for the Lake City Food Bank operated by North Helpline. This organization provides food and emergency assistance for North Seattle residents.

**University Playground Park**  
\$25,000 is secured to complete the Landmark Fence Project to revitalize the historic University Playground Park opened in 1911.



*Bob and Gayle Lockwood sort clothes to sell at the Ryther Child Center's thrift store "R-Shoppe" in Ballard.*